

Eye on the Target

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Summary: Nick spends some time down at the firing range to calm his mind. Having been on the force for 3 months, Nick wonders if his feelings for Judy run deeper than just friendship. Does Officer Wilde have a crush on Judy Hopps? My first attempt at any sort of story. You just have to love the JudyxNick ship :P This may well just be a oneshot, depending how I feel about it. Enjoy!

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"ZPD! DROP THE WEAPON!"

***BANG BANG BANG***

Three clean shots, dead on target. A gripping silence fills the room. The faint sounds of clicks as the spent bullet cartridges bounce off the cemented floor, still warm from the gun.

He looks in front of him, slowly lowering his service weapon. The pungent smell of burning propellant fills his sensitive nostrils, causing him to cringe ever so slightly. His whiskers flinch reactively, brushing the air around them.

"HOT DAMN SON! That's some A grade shooting right there" A booming voice calls from behind him. Nick removes his ear protectors and glances back to the voice behind; a tall lanky wolf leans against the thin partition, mouth agape in amazement. The wolf eyes the paper target down the range before focusing again on the fox in front of him.

"Could you please not, Officer McKeller. I was in... the zone..."_ Nick turned back to his booth, ejecting his magazine and placing the gun on safety. He removes his ballistic goggles, placing them on the table beside him.

"Come on Wilde, drop the tough guy act." The wolf can't help but let out a chuckle. He too removes his ear plugs as he props himself up against the white dividers in between the shooting lanes.

"What do you mean Chris?" Nick replies. He activates a switch beside the table, bringing the paper target towards him. The dull humming and occasional squealing of the mechanical belt fills the silence between the two officers.

Someone really needs to oil that thing...

"You know!" The wolf cries out in exasperation. "Your 'I'm a scary, hard-boiled police detective' act" He puts on a menacingly serious face whilst trying his best impression of a film-noir detective.

Nick lets out an amused snicker. He shakes his head as he examines the paper target in front of him. Three clean shots on the upper torso -centre of mass. _Damn I'm good at this._

"I really don't know what you're talking about Chris. Your imagination is hyperactive again." Nick replies whilst re-examining the pistol he had just been firing. His paw grips the gun tightly as he aims it again down range.

"Don't worry Nick, we all know the ladies like that image. If it's any consolation, you pull it off very well" Chris raises an eyebrow at Nick whilst giving him a smug grin, signalling a clear message. The tall, grey wolf fidgets with his Kevlar body armour as he speaks.

"Unlike you, Officer McKeller, I don't need to put on an image to impress the ladies..."

Nick placed the handgun back onto the table, once again ensuring the gun was unloaded and safe. He looks back at the officer behind him and continues.

"...You on the other hand have yet to understand why you can't communicate to females" Nick watches as Chris pushes himself off the flimsy partition dividing the firing lanes.

5:25PM. The armoury is empty. Most officers are either out on patrol or filling out bureaucratic paperwork.

McKeller walks closer to Nick, pulling him in by the shoulder. The wolf stands taller than Nick, not significantly, but enough to make a difference. He leans in, lowering his voice ever so slightly.

"Oh, I'm so offended Officer Wilde." He feigns a look of tragedy, mocking Nick's backhanded jibe. "As I was saying... I bet Judy's really into the cool, rebellious, troublemaker kinda mammal, isn't she?"

He let go of Nick, causing him to stumble slightly. Just the slight mention of her name had got to him. Nick looked away, a slight blush building up on his face. He had hoped Chris hadn't caught it.

"Yeah... Well, I wouldn't know much about that. She's obviously into the 'diligent pen-pusher type'. I'm pretty sure".

Nick removed the paper target whilst making an effort to hide his face from his colleague behind him. Having just clipped on a fresh paper target, he pushes the switch again. With the same dull humming and incessant squealing, the motorized belt sends the target down range, ready to be shot at again.

Seriously. Someone really needs to oil the belt. Like, for real.

"Oh..." The wolf casts Nick an innocent smile. "So you're saying that I've got a chance to make a move on Judy?" He chuckles in his fiendishly antagonistic voice.

Nick reacts instantly. His ears instantly shoot up. He feels an icy chill run down his spine. "NO!"

The sudden outburst startles the other officer. His smirk slowly morphs into a devilish grin. It's obvious that he'd struck a nerve with Nick.

"-I mean." Nick turns around to face the wolf. His face of exasperation and annoyance give him away. "I don't think Judy is interested in any mammals right now. She's obviously dedicated to her work"

"I'm just saying. Look at me; charming, dashing, dedicated to helping the mammals of Zootop-"

*WHAP*

A furry paw whacks him in the face.

"Ouch. What was that for?"

Nick shoots him an unamused look. "I was just doing my duty as a police officer: stopping public nuisances."

Chris McKeller responds by giving Nick a hearty slap on the back. "Har har Nick, very funny. Is it just you or do all foxes have your _amazing_sense of humour?"

Why do I put up with him Nick thought to himself as he pushed the wolf off. "Nope, just yours truly" he replies with a sleepy grin.

Nick turned back to Chris, eyeing him carefully. The taller grey wolf looks larger than he actually is with the uniform, utility belt and body armour added on. In comparison, he himself gains little in the way of size even with all his police equipment on. Nick wondered how he managed to get himself where he was today. If some mammal had told him three years ago that he would be joining the ZPD, he would have laughed at their faces.

Nick had joined the force almost year ago thanks to a certain bunny. His life was completely changed after meeting that rabbit, mostly for the better. He was finally doing something he could say he was proud of. Not to mention spending time with his best friend in the

world.

Judy Hopps.

His body tingled just thinking about her. He sighed deeply, unable to focus on anything else anymore. Something about her that just clicks with him. Her cute little face. Her outward personality. Her endless determination. Her ability to find the best in any mammal. Not to mention that cute, tight as-

"Your aim is great by the way."

Nick shakes his head, still lost in his thoughts.

"What?"

"I said, your aim is great by the way." The wolf repeats to him. "Gee, you seem pretty out of it Nick. Do you need to sit down or something?"

Nick waves back dismissively at him, ignoring his concerns. "Nah, I'm just daydreaming about stuff Chris. You know, work and stuff."

"...Or about a certain police bunny?"

Nick immediately swivels around. He shoots Chris with an accusing look. "What? No, of course not!"

"OOHH... sure. Don't worry Nick. Your secret crush on Judy is safe with me" The wolf stuck out his tongue in amusement, delighted that he had figured how to push

Nick's buttons.

"I DON'T HAVE A CRUSH ON JUDY! OKAY?" He grabbed Chris by the shoulders and shouted directly to his face.

"O...M...GOODNESS! Who has a crush on Judy?"

_Oh Lord no_Nick thought to himself as he let go of his partner's shirt. He slowly turned to the direction of the voice. _Please don't let it be him. Please, anyone but him_.

Nick prayed to himself silently as he looked up from the ground.

"Helloooo guys." The chubby, roly-poly cheetah strolled into the armoury, bringing along with him a series of files and clipboards. Out of anybody in the entire precinct, he would probably be the last person you trust with any deep secrets. It's no surprise that gossip gets 'round the department so quickly.

Nick lets out another exasperating sigh. The last thing he needs is a certain cheetah spreading rumours about his _alleged_ crush on Judy. He quickly turns to address his less than nimble cheetah friend.

"Hello Clawhauser..." He lets out a nervous chuckle. "...How much of that conversation did you just hear?"

The cheetah let out a delightful squeal.

_Urgh. Doesn't he have some doughnuts that need eating or something?_Nick thought to himself

Chris quickly leans over to Clawhauser, intent on divulging his latest dirt on Nick.

"Well, a certain fox in this precinct has a certain little crush on his cute bunny partner." He whispers to Clawhauser who replies with scandalous gasp accompanied by another squeal.

"Hey! You can't call her cute! Only other bunnies and I can call her that." Nick interjects defensively.

They both look at him in delight. Obviously amused that he's only digging himself into a larger hole.

_Ah Crap_Nick thought to himself. _Why couldn't you keep your mouth shut Wilde?_

"Don't worry, Nicky. I'm sure you two would be great together" Clawhauser remarked to his now red faced fox friend.

"Clawhauser. One, don't call me Nicky. Only Judy calls me Nicky. Two, why are you even here? You would never walk this far down the building for no reason."

It was true. Clawhauser worked primarily at reception and in dispatch. The sweat patches on his neck and armpits reveal just how much effort he went through. This was no social visit.

"Yeah, Benji. You would never walk what? Down two flights of stairs and through 3 corridors just to pay us a visit." Chris added. He motioned towards the sweat patches on the plump cheetah.

"You guys." Clawhauser replied playfully. "I'm here because I need you two to sign off on your last report. I called you guys twice today and the Chief wants it on his desk by tomorrow morning sharp." He motioned towards the assortment of files and clipboards he had brought along and dumped on the table beside Nick.

Nick looked through the various sheets of paper, recognizing his and Chris' handwriting. It was indeed their write up on their previous case. Clawhauser did have a point; the Chief does get pretty pissed off when reports come in late, something Nick certainly did not want a repeat of.

"Okay Clawhauser" Nick said as he looked through the files. "Your alibi checks out. I'll sign your papers, if you forget everything you heard here today."

Clawhauser placed his paws on his cheeks, letting out a loud gasp.

"Nick! Are you trying to make a deal with me?" The chubby cheetah eyed Nick a suspicious look. "You do realize that all three of us are screwed if these reports don't get signed, right?"

_Dumbass_Nick screamed to himself in his head.

"He's got a point there Nick. You got to offer him something he can't resist." Chris added.

Nick suddenly came up with a brilliant plan. Although he'd turned a new leaf when he joined the force, that's not to say that he had stopped using some of his tricks learned as a con-mammal. He devised a devilishly cunning plan in his head. It was bound to work; this was Clawhauser we're talking about.

"Okay Benji Boy. Here's the deal then. We play a little game-"

"OOHH I love games" Benjamin quickly shouted. He looked at Nick, realizing his interruption. "Heh heh. Sorry"

"As I was saying" Nick adjusted his tie. He had ditched his favourite striped purple tie for a dark navy blue.

What a dull colour He thought to himself _AND it's a clip on..._

"We play a little game. If you win, you get to keep our little secret and I'll buy you a dozen doughnuts on Monday."

The enticement of sweet treats had already sold the gluttonous cheetah. "Krispy Kreme's right? None of that other crap the department sometimes buys" Clawhauser squints angrily at the ceiling almost as if he's directing it to a certain police chief.

"Yeah, whatever kind you want Benji. BUT" Nick holds out his paws for added effect. "If I win, you gotta keep your little cheetah mouth shut AND owe me a favour that I can use at any time."

Clawhauser weighs his options carefully. Potentially lose Judy/Nick gossip or win some to die for doughnuts? It was honestly a difficult situation to put a cheetah like him in to decide.

Chris breaks the silence. Largely because he notices a bit of drool starting to leak from the cheetah's mouth.

"Ummm... Benji. You okay?" He prods the cheetah, almost losing his paw in the folds under the cheetah's face.

"Oh, yeah. I' fine Chris. Thanks for asking." Clawhauser is determined to get his gossip... and his doughnuts.

"So, you accept the deal?" Nick inquires, giving Clawhauser a feigned face of concern.

"Okay Nicky. I'll play your game." Clawhauser grins at him "But first, you two need to sign the damn reports"

He passes both of them a pen. The two canids grab the pens and diligently sign off on the corresponding pages. They finish scribbling on their reports and neatly stack the folders in the correct order.

"Great! I love you guys." Clawhauser leans in and grabs both of them round the shoulders. He hugs them both tightly, almost crushing a rib

or two of both of them.

Oh God Clawhauser. I can't breathe...

He releases the pair before stacking the now signed piles of reports.

"So what's the game then Nicky?" Clawhauser ponders as he looks around the room for a seat. He'd been standing _way_too long now. _Damn it, why doesn't the department buy more chairs?_ He curses internally.

Nick clears his throat.

Ahem

"You gotta shoot the target down range AND land at least half the shots on the centre"

He gestures to the paper target, twenty five metres down range. Clawhauser's eyes widen at the prospect of having to achieve such a feat. He eyes the paper criminal in the distance before shooting Nick an annoyed look.

"Come on Nick. You want to do that?" Clawhauser placed both paws on his hips, obviously disapproving of the situation he had got himself into.

"Is there a problem Officer Clawhauser? Surely this is nothing for you. Every cadet went through this back at the academy. Any officer should be decently proficient with a service weapon." Nick emphasized his unsympathetic voice. He knew exactly how to wind up a mammal.

"Yeah well, you know I stay in station most of the time Nick. Besides! I haven't fired a gun since my time at the academy. Thank the Lord I haven't had to use one since."

He was right about that. Gun crime isn't a huge issue in Zootopia. Although officers are armed most of the time, many have never had to draw their weapon. The police department is blessed with a variety of less than lethal options; pepper spray, batons, tasers. Then again, most officers are still expected to maintain their skills, in case of any eventuality.

McKeller interjected, obviously concerned at the lack of fairness in this deal.

"Nick, you really think Clawhauser has any chance of hitting the target?"

"Hey, he agreed to the terms and conditions. I'm just asking something reasonable out of this fine police officer here" He gave Clawhauser a playful nudge to emphasize his point.

"Okay. I'll do it." Clawhauser approached the firing lane, eyeing the paper assailant.

Nick passed him a pair of ear plugs and ballistic goggles which he dons clumsily. The cheetah picked up the empty pistol in the table

before examining it carefully.

"Don't worry Clawhauser. It's a dependable gun; twelve rounds, good sights, easy to use." Nick points out to him

"Go for it Benji, you only need to land six of them." Chris tries to give the cheetah some moral support from behind.

Nick passes the dispatch officer a fully loaded magazine. He loads it slowly, pushing the magazine up until he hears a metallic click.

"No pressure big guy" Nick calls into his ear, just to make sure he heard it.

Come on Benjamin Clawhauser, you can do this. Make your Momma proud.

He cocks the gun, loading the first round into the chamber. A hushing silence fills the room. None of the three mammals moves an inch.

Deep breaths. Just like back in the day. Concentrate.

He brings his pistol up to a firing position, aiming carefully down the sights. From behind, both Nick and Chris are watching the beads of sweat now trickling down the cheetah's back. It's too much for the wolf, he covers his face with his paws, unable to watch what will happened next

Squeeze, don't pull. Do it. Do it for the doughnuts!

*BANG BANG BANG*

*BANG BANG BANG BANG*

Chris peeks out slightly between the gaps in his paws. He can't make out the targets from where he's standing but he can see Nick. He watches his face, keen to work out what's going on through his reaction.

Unfazed. Nick stands there smugly with his typical foxy grin. Chris still can't bear to look and continues to hide behind his paws.

*BANG BANG BANG BANG*

A pause. Silence. Nothing

*BANG*

*Click*

The sound of an empty magazine. Twelve rounds, all discharged.

Again, the room is hushed. Only the sounds on the bouncing metal casings resonate throughout the tight armoury.

"Oh God, I need a glass of water. Or better yet, an ice cold soda would be nice..."

Officer McKeller quickly moves in front, eager to get a view. He casts his eyes down the range, unable to precisely make out the hits on the target. He looks to Nick, still smiling his stupid trademark grin.

"Hurry up Wilde. I want to see the target!" Chris shouts, trying his best not to punch the fox in the face. Nick doesn't move, still propped against the tall partition. Clawhauser by now has emptied his gun, engaged the safety and placed in on the table. He leans over and tries his best to stay standing. He grabs his tie, wiping the numerous sweat trails off his face.

"Move over Wilde!" Chris brushed past and toggled the switch. The annoying hum and squeak of the conveyor once again filling the room

_For Fucks sake! Someone really needs to oil that. Seriously._Chris thought to himself as he waited for the target to get to the trio of mammals.

Click

The conveyor belt stopped as the target reached the group.

They all stared at it for a minute.

None of the three moved.

All frozen.

Staring at the target in front of them.

Chris eyed the holes in the white paper.

One

Two

Three

Four, five, six, seven

Eight, nine

Ten

Eleven.

Eleven shots on target.

Chris let out a loud cheer and patted Clawhauser on the back.

"Fucking. Brilliant." He stated bluntly. Chris gave Clawhauser an equally large and loving hug as he had given them earlier. "Still one of the top shooters at the academy I see, eh Clawhauser?"

"Well, I try my best Chris." Clawhauser let out a quiet wheeze as he

tries to regain his breath.

Chris and Clawhauser turn to Nick, still frozen in place. His face slowly melts away from his sly grin to a face of utter confusion.

The face of utter disbelief.

The face that says: "Oh Shit."

"WHAT THE FUCK BENJI?" Nick turns around, grabbing the sweaty cheetah and shaking him. At least, he tried to shake him. It would take more than a small fox to move _that_cheetah

"HOW THE FUCK DID YOU SCORE 11?" Nick bashed his head against the crÃ"me white partition. Watching as Chris snapped a picture of the target on his phone.

"Well Nick..." Replied Chris. "You probably should have checked what your opponent is capable of before you challenge them to a game you can't beat them in."

Nick looked at Chris before eyes Clawhauser suspiciously. Clearly nervous about his win, Clawhauser quickly grabbed the various files and papers off the table. Nick cried out.

"How did HE land ELEVEN shots dead in the KILL zone?" Nick took his anger out on the ear protectors and goggles on the table. His only consolation being that the armoury was empty when this happened. At least he still had his dignity and image intact; nobody else would have to know about this.

"Well, it's an inside secret that Officer Clawhauser here holds one of the academy records for his sharpshooting." Chris responds whilst patting Clawhauser on the back. The cheetah smiles modestly and squirms under the compliment.

"AND YOU KNEW ABOUT THIS?" Nick, still very much pissed off now points an accusatory ringer at Chris. "You knew! You two set me up! You assholes"

Clawhauser makes his way to the other end of the room, pleased with himself. He turns around and replies to Nick in his best imitation of the fox's voice.

"It's called a hustle. Sweetheart." And with that he turned around and continued walking out.

"Shut up! That's my line." Nick gives an obscene hand gesture before crossing his arms and pouting in the corner.

The grey wolf approaches him playfully. Having just returned the weapon and the related items into storage, the officer was ready to go home. He nudges Nick by the shoulder playfully.

"Come one Nick, let's get out of here. No hard feelings." The fox had grabbed Nicholas' things; his phone, wallet, badge and other personal loose items off the table. He handed them to the grumpy, defeated fox. It was rare to see a fox, let alone Nick being hustled. Rumour has it, the only other officer to have done it was a certain bunny

cop.

"I hate losing." Was all Nick could reply with. Clearly, his entire evening would be soured by today's events.

Chris laughed, knowing all too well that Nick was annoyed not because he was played, but he was played by Benjamin Clawhauser.

"Don't let it get to you Nick. Its only Clawhauser. He ain't gonna go around bragging to the whole department"

"Sure. If you say so" Nick muttered quietly. He was further saddened by the knowledge that the rest of his evening would probably be binge watching Pawflix series in his apartment... Alone.

"Cheer up buddy. I think some lady friend of yours wants to spend some time with you"

What?

Nicks ears quickly shot up. Looking at his face, you could tell that he was immediately excited at the thought of spending some time with Judy.

"What do you mean Chris?" Nick eyed him suspiciously, casting his partner an apprehensive look.

"Check your phone. I think bunny girl wants to see you." Chris laughed as he pointed towards the message notification on Nick's phone.

Nick's eyes lit up as he unlocked his phone and read the message. If Chris wasn't mistaken, Nick had almost let out a childish squeal, like a little cub would when their crush agreed to go to the school prom with him.

Hey Nicky. I just finished my shift. I'm just about to go get changed.

Do you have any plans for this evening? Wanna do something?

-Judy X

"YES!" Nick fist pumped as he unconsciously started to walk faster to the exit. He wasted no time in texting back to the rabbit.

Yeah, I'm free tonight. You wanna grab a bite? We could chill at my place later?

I'll be waiting at the usual place

See you Carrots X

He clutched is phone close to his chest, bouncing with excitement. Beside him, Officer McKeller laughed and shook his head. It was obvious that Nick had a thing for Judy.

"Yo, Nick. You sent her a kiss. What's that about?" He questioned, eager to take a final jab at Nick before they parted.

Nick fell for the bait. He struggled to find an answer. Hiding his blushed cheeks behind his orange fur.

"Well... Uh- You know. She sent an X. So... I uh- I was just going along with it. That's all." He gives a nervous giggle.

***beep beep***

His message tone. He quickly unlocked his phone before reading the incoming message. His smile quickly melts away, leaving only his pissed off scowl once more.

"Oh! Fuck off!" Nick screamed in annoyance

"What? What did she say?" Nick extended his paw, revealing the new message. Chris looked at the screen in genuine curiosity. He read the message twice before almost falling over in delightful agony. He clutched his stomach, unable to contain his laughter.

"OH! I'll see you tomorrow Wilde. Have a good night" He waved as he went to the changing room. His laughs becoming quieter in the distance.

Nick returned to his phone. He sent a short and to-the-point reply before re-reading the original message.

HEEYA Nicky. Just wanted to remind you...

Don't forget my DOUGHNUTS on Monday. Krispy Kreme. Get a good mix!

-Clawhauser

**_PS: Don't worry Nicky. Your secret's safe with me
:P_**

Delete

End
file.